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**Inventory for  
Manuscript Collection  
MS-374**

**U. S. Marine Hospital Records—Bath**  
**Inclusive dates: n.d., 1856-1910**  
**Bulk dates: 1878-1910**

by  
Tracy Lamaestra  
November 2012

Shelf feet: 2 linear feet  
Number of boxes: 3  
*Accession no. 2004.38, 2004.66.397*

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## Abstract

### U. S. Marine Hospital

Records, n.d., 1856-1910 (Bulk dates: 1878-1910)

2 Manuscript boxes, one horizontal box (2 Shelf feet)

A Federal marine hospital, Bath, Maine.

A collection of correspondence and invoices and five bound volumes consisting of patient and outpatient records, a record of medical inspections of seamen and records of public property for the U. S. Marine Hospital at Bath. The collection is arranged as follows: Series I. Registers for U. S. Marine Hospital, Series II. Record of Medical Inspections of Seamen, Series III. Letter and Invoice book and Series IV. Record of Public Property.

Purchase from Steve Finer-Rare Books, 2004. Gift from Charles E. Burden, 2004.

MS-374. Accession No. 2004.38, 2004.66.397.

Related material in repository, MS-26 and MS-65

Finding aid available in repository: folder level control.

#### Added entries—persons:

Bibber, Randall D., *Acting Assistant Surgeon*

Raymond, John H., *Deputy Collector*

Rice, William, C., *Acting Assistant Surgeon*

#### Added entries—places:

Bath (ME)

Portland (ME)

#### Added entries—corporate bodies (including vessels):

U. S. Marine Hospital, Bath

U. S. Marine Hospital, Portland

#### Added entries—key terms:

Bath (ME)--Hospitals

Hospitals, Naval and Marine

Medicine

Merchant seamen

Merchant seamen—Medical care or Diseases

### **Acquisition**

Documents pertaining to the U. S. Marine Hospital Records at Bath were purchased by the Maine Maritime Museum from Steve Finer-Rare Books of Greenfield, Massachusetts on June 29, 2004, accession no. 2004.38.1.

On December 27, 2004, Charles E. Burden purchased from dealer, Hugh S. Morris, six bound volumes of custom house records, accession no. 2004.66.397. Five volumes are of the U. S. Marine Hospital at Bath and the sixth volume is Misc. Conveyances, Collector's Office, Customs House, The sixth volume was removed and placed in MS-26, Bath Custom House Records.

### **Provenance**

It is not known at this time how the dealers acquired these federal record collections.

### **Restrictions**

There are no restrictions on the study or use of these materials.

### **Physical Condition**

Most of the volumes in this record group are quarter or half-bound in leather with marble paper covered and/or buckram cloth front and backboards. All show wear and deterioration. Pages are soiled, stained or discolored. Take note of:

- Outpatients register (1878-1885) - Oversize. Torn spine. Front board broken free. Loose signature and pages. Papers adhered to register. Warped.
- Outpatients register (1895-1910) - Oversize. Torn outer spine.
- Patients register (1878-1897) - Torn spine.
- Letter and invoice book (1878-1895) - Records were attached to binder by adhesive strips. These documents were carefully removed from binder and placed in sleeves. These were then re-housed in an acid-free folder stock enclosure. The front and backboards accompany letter and invoice book separately.

All the loose papers with creases and/or folds were flattened with a tacking iron at low to medium heat and placed in archival folders.

## Processing Notes

The collection of registers, record books and a letter and invoice book were arranged into four series: Series I. Registers of U. S. Marine Hospital, Series II. Record of Medical Inspections of Seamen, Series III. Letter and invoice book, and Series IV. Record of Public Property. Series I have been divided into two subseries: Subseries Ia. Outpatients and Subseries Ib. Patients. Registers were arranged chronologically within their respective subseries.

The two different accessions, 2004.38.1 and 2004.66.397, were initially combined as they both relate to the U. S. Marine Hospital at Bath, Maine. One bound manuscript volume titled, "The Record of Miscellaneous Conveyances of All Kinds, Collector's Office, Custom House" was part of accession no. 2004.66.397. This volume does not pertain to the U.S. Marine Hospital at Bath. Instead, it contains vessel related information. This was moved to MS-26 Bath Custom House Records.

## Historical Notes

The U. S. Marine Hospital in Bath was a Relief Station (Class IV) of the U. S. Public Health and Marine Services.<sup>1</sup> A relief station of the Marine-Hospital Service was established at a port situated on any navigable water of the United States where an officer of the Marine-Hospital Service was on duty to extend relief to seamen or where an officer of the customs service was specifically authorized to extend said relief. Relief Stations were divided into the following categories:

**Class I.** United States Marine Hospitals.

**Class II.** All other stations under command of a commissioned officer.

**Class III.** All stations under charge of an acting assistant surgeon where there is a contract for the care of the sick and disabled seamen.

**Class IV.** All other relief stations not included in the above classes.<sup>2</sup>

Bath, Maine falls under the Class IV category. Relief stations of the Marine-Hospital Service were grouped into eight districts: North Atlantic, Middle Atlantic, South Atlantic, Gulf, Ohio, Mississippi, Great Lakes and Pacific. The district of the North Atlantic included the following relief stations: Bangor, ME; Barnstable, MA; **Bath, ME**; Belfast, ME; Boston, MA; Burlington, VT; Castine, ME; Eastport, ME; Edgartown, MA; Ellsworth, ME; Gloucester, MA; Machias, ME; New Bedford, MA; Newport, RI; Portland, ME; Portsmouth, NH; Providence, RI; Rockland, ME; Salem, MA; Vineyard Haven, MA; Waldoboro, ME and Wiscasset, ME.<sup>2</sup>

Marine-hospital offices were located at custom houses. This is where applicants for relief were received and examined. The persons entitled to the benefits of the Marine-Hospital Service were those employed on board in the care, preservation, or navigation of any registered, enrolled, or licensed vessel of the United States, or in the service of those engaged in such care, preservation, or navigation. A sick or disabled seaman had to apply in person or by proxy if too sick or disabled at the office of the Marine-Hospital Service to an acting assistant surgeon or the proper customs official and supply satisfactory evidence that he was entitled to relief under the regulations. Applicants must have been employed for 60 days of continuous service. Masters were to supply seamen employed on vessels with a certificate for length of service.<sup>2</sup>

Outpatients were defined as sick or disabled seamen whose disease or injuries could be treated by medicines, dressings, surgical appliances or advice without admission to a hospital. Outpatients were recorded in registers. Seamen with valid claims received a relief certificate from the customs officer or acting assistant surgeon (Form 1915).<sup>2</sup> Relief certificates (Form 1915) presented in this collection were issued to Griffith Castro last aboard the *Mary E. Collins* (Schooner) with an overall record of 24 years. He was treated for bronchitis on September 18, 1886. Ellsworth J. Smith employed for a period of 8 years last vessel, *Henry Lippett* (Schooner). Smith was treated for gonorrhea on July 5, 1894.<sup>3</sup>

Customs officers or acting assistant surgeons at the Relief Station of Class IV at Bath provided care and treatment to seamen. They issued hospital permits for treatment (Form 1916). The Acting Assistant Surgeon was Randall D. Bibber and Deputy Collector was John H. Raymond. Oftentimes, sick or disabled seamen were transported to the U. S. Marine Hospital at Portland for long continued treatment. An invoice of the U. S. Marine Hospital Service shows that ill seamen Owen Roach and William A. Winchill were transported from Bath to Portland on June 11 and June 13, 1889, respectively.<sup>4</sup> The Register of Patients (1878-1897) records patient after patient sent to Portland for hospitalization.<sup>5</sup>

Seamen were also cared for at boarding homes. Treasury Department circular letter titled "Arrangements for the Care of Seamen" dated June 21, 1882 notes that Joseph Soiett furnished board and nursing care in Bath at 85 cents per a day for ill seamen.<sup>6</sup> The Soiett name is listed throughout the Patients Register book (1878-1897) under "Subsequent Complications" as well. For example, Sargent Marins of the *Maud H. Dudley* (Schooner) convalesced at Soietts with rheumatism for 120 days. Henry Gunderson of the *City of Philadelphia* (Steamer) recovered from typhoid fever at Soietts for 55 days. Thorkill Johnson of the schooner *L. C. Ballard* recuperated from rubella for 10 days at Soietts. Joseph Soiett is listed in the *Bath City Directory for 1883-1884* as proprietor of the Columbian House located on Front Street where these boarders must have resided. Furthermore, Soiett was a shipping agent for Smith and Soiett with partner, Eugene O. Smith a U. S. shipping commissioner. The Smith and Soiett business was located on Commercial near Broad in Bath.<sup>9</sup>

Other boarding houses listed in the Patients Register book were named "Howards" or "Dodges." The records show Thomas Wilson of the *Belle Higgins* (Schooner) was at Howards for 60 days recovering from frost bite in both hands. John Olsen of the *Elliot L. Dow* (Schooner) was at Dodges for 13 days healing from dysentery.<sup>7</sup> According to the *Bath City Directory for 1892*, William J. Howard was superintendent of the U. S. Marine Hospital in Bath. Howard resided at 36 Elm where he may have boarded the seaman Thomas Wilson. In the *Bath City Directory for 1892*, Margaret J. Dodge is listed as having a boarding house at 209 Water. Furthermore, the *Directory of Bath, 1897* notes Alpheus Dodge has a boarding house at 209 Water. These may be the Dodges whom boarded the seaman John Olsen.<sup>10, 11</sup>

Seamen had assorted injuries and diseases. Syphilis and gonorrhea were the two most prevalent illnesses. Sailors also had boils, bronchitis, typhoid fever, swamp fever, malaria, rheumatic fever, rubella, small pox, abscesses, rheumatism, piles, nephritis, bowel issues, hernias, meningitis, mumps, dysentery, small pox, gunshot wounds, dyspepsia, whooping cough, pneumonia, fractures, dislocations, sprains, lacerations, frost bite, amputations and scabies.

In particular, Isaac Edwards had an incised wound with intestines protruding on March 23, 1882 when stationed on the steamer *City of Richmond*. He was sent to the Portland Hospital.<sup>8</sup> Seamen met death as well. Frederick R. Post died of congestion of the brain (brain swelling) on August 26, 1894 at the age of 36. He was employed on the *Adelia T. Carlton*

(Schooner).<sup>7, 12</sup> Christian Johnson died of enteric fever (typhoid fever) on October 17, 1894 at the age of 35. He was assigned to the schooner *Warren Moore*.<sup>7</sup>

Public property records were kept of the supplies and equipment received at the U. S. Marine Hospital--Bath. This was conducted by a commissioned officer or acting assistant surgeon. Incoming property included office furniture, surgical instruments, pharmacal implements, books, expendable stationery, medical supplies (includes medicines) and miscellaneous. William C. Rice (Acting Assistant Surgeon) kept the Record of Public Property (1906-1910) at Bath.

### References cited:

1. *United States Coast Pilot Atlantic Coast, Part IV, From Point Judith to New York*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1899. E-book.
2. *Revised Regulations for the Government of the United States Marine-Hospital Service*. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1897. E-book.
3. MS-374. Box 3. Letter and invoice book. Folder 5. Relief certificates, 1886, 1894.
4. MS-374. Box 3. Letter and invoice book. Folder 3. Accounts general. June 11-13, 1889.
5. MS-374. Box 2. Register of Patients, 1878-1897.
6. MS-374. Box 3, Letter and Invoice book. Circular letter, June 21, 1882.
7. MS-374. Box 2. Patient Register, 1878-1897.
8. MS-374. Box 1. Outpatient Register, 1878-1885.
9. Greenough, W. A. *Bath, Brunswick and Richmond Directory for 1883-84*. Portland: B. Thurston and Co., 1883.
10. *Bath City Directory*. Portland: Brown Thurston Company, 1892.
11. Shaw, Wm. E. *Directory of Bath and Surrounding Towns, 1897*. Vol. II. Boston, W. E. Shaw, 1897.
12. <http://freepages.history.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~earlystlouis/oldmedicalterms.html>

### Scope and Content Notes

This is a collection of outpatient and patient registers, record of medical inspections of seamen, letter and invoice book and record of public property for U. S. Marine Hospital at Bath, Maine. Additional loose papers were found in Patient Register (1878-1897) and the Letter and Invoice book (1873-1895). Outpatient registers record seamen, last vessel, previous relief, present disease or illness, date and kind of relief furnished. Patient registers list seamen, age, nativity, name of vessel, date of admission, disease or injury, subsequent complications, date of discharge, date of death, condition of discharge and days in hospital. The Record of Medical Inspections of Seamen capture the names of seamen, date, age, nativity, how long an American seaman, vessel to be shipped on, at whose request, examiner's certificate and remarks.

In the Outpatient Register, 1878-1885, is an adhered circular letter and directions for registering outpatients inside the cover. These records are guidelines for the sick and disabled seamen to get treatment at the U. S. Marine Hospital, Bath. This register also shows seamen could be admitted to the Portland Hospital or be provided with a boarding house if they needed additional care.

Furthermore, circular letters in the Letter and Invoice book (1873-1895) provide some valuable information. There are circular letters for the care of insane seamen, examination of

pilots for color blindness, prevention of cholera, arrangements for the care of seamen, contracts for the care of seamen, threatened or actual epidemics and physical examination of foreign seamen as preliminary to shipment. In particular, a circular letter dated December 27, 1882 discusses the prevention of small pox and how steamboats became carriers of the infection. The Treasury Department documented that 143 cases of small pox were taken from 95 vessels during the last season and seamen were infecting the cities with the disease. Crewmen need to be vaccinated and infected bedding be burnt instead of throwing it into the river. Correspondence in this same book provides additional insight concerning seamen. A letter dated September 16, 1876 discusses the cost of a coffin for a deceased seaman. Moreover, there is a letter dated February 13, 1880 to R. D. Bibber about the definition of "Hospital Cases" and "Out Patients." There are also some Relief Certificates in this same book. Lastly, in the loose papers found in the Letter and Invoice book (1873-1895) there is a confidential letter to Dr. Bibber from the Treasury Department on June 10, 1895 (box 3, folder 2). Walter Wyman discusses the term yellow fever and how the code word "lupus" was adopted as meaning yellow fever. This avoided publicity and unnecessary alarm. The code word for cholera was "minim." In this same folder, is a letter from seaman James R. Hartford to Dr. Bibber asking for medication.

### **Description of Series**

#### **Series I. Registers for U. S. Marine Hospital (1878-1910)**

These are outpatient and patient registers for the U. S. Marine Hospital in Bath, Maine. The registers document seamen, vessel, disease or injury and relief furnished among other detailed information. A loose paper found inside Patient Register (1878-1897) is a bill and dividend record, 1856, which appears to have nothing to do with the Register.

#### **Series II. Record of Medical Inspections of Seamen (1880-1910)**

Medical inspections of seamen for vessels they intended to ship on and whether or not they passed.

#### **Series III. Letter and Invoice Book (n.d., 1873-1909)**

Letter and invoice book of incoming correspondence, relief certificates, circular letters, appointment, memorandum and index. Loose papers found inside book include incoming correspondence, circular letters, relief certificates, and transcript of medical inspections for seamen, accounts general, report and blank forms.

#### **Series IV. Record of Public Property (1906-1910)**

This is a record of equipment and supplies for the U. S. Marine Hospital at Bath. Records of office furniture, surgical instruments, pharmacal implements, books, expendable stationery, medical supplies (includes medicines) and miscellaneous.



**MS-374 U. S. Marine Hospital Records—Bath  
Finding Aid**

**Box# Folder#**

**Series I. Register of Patients for U.S. Marine Hospital**

*Sub-series Ia. Outpatients*

- 1 — Bound volume, 1878-1885
- Bound volume, 1895-1910

*Sub-series Ib. Patients*

- 2 — Bound volume, 1878-1897
- 1 Includes loose paper found inside book, 1856

**Series II. Record of Medical Inspections of Seamen**

- Bound volume, 1880-1910

**Series III. Letter and Invoice Book (includes loose papers found inside book)**

- 3 — Correspondence and other documents, Dr. Bibber, includes index, 1873-1895  
*(Removed from adhesive letter and invoice file “scrapbook” and rehoused)*
  - 1 Front and backboards of letter and invoice file “scrapbook
  - 2 Incoming correspondence, 1879-1909/Circular letters, 1876-1897
  - 3 Accounts general, n.d., 1887-1908
  - 4 Report, 1881/Medical Inspection of seamen. n.d.
  - 5 Relief certificates, 1886, 1894/Blank forms
  - 6 Blank forms, n.d.

**Series IV. Record of Public Property**

- Bound volume, 1906-1910